Background on present Loran Hall-House committee situation HW 5/23/77

When I inrerviewed Hall in February 1968 my purposes were limited. I was, of course, curious about him and the others of his species. He had gone to court and defeated Garrison's effort to call him before the grand jury. Not understanding what I came to understand about Garrison I persuaded both Hall and Howard to go there voluntarily. Garrison was satisfied they were connected with nothing.

He and Howard had been spoken to by many reporters before I spoke to them.

Howard took me to Hemming that October.

All three impressed me as men trying to live movie parts, each differently.

All bragged, all exaggerated, Howard least of all. I', sure Hall and Hemming lied. I'm also sure they can't distonguish much of their lying as lying.

Some weeks ago, immediately after the National Enquirer had the plug for Weberman and Sibley, I heard from Art Kevin, who had heard from a very troubled Hall. Art and he have stayed in touch. More or less. Weberman and others unknown to Hall had been calling him on his unlisted phone, the others with "love and kisses from Santo," Weberman claiming to represent the Enquirer. Hall claimed the greeting was the mafia rubout notice. Art said that Hall said he was about to skip.

I believe there was a suggestion that Weberman represented the committee, too. Not sure.

Art asked me about them. I said stay away and explained my dealings and their nuttiness.

Art called me again Friday, after his experiences with the commiee's Klein and Fenton Thursday. Art was still upset over their breaking of their word to him and Hall. And the way he was treated in general. (He said they behaved like thugs.) I suggested how he register his protest and go public. He said his station had already, 2 1/2 minutes. I suggested who he call on the NYTimes after he said he would see if UPI would handle a story.When I offered to put Lardner in touch he agreed. I told Lardner what Art had told me, gave him Art's phoned, and Lardner called me back later, after pseaking to Art and someone at the committee, connected with Preyer. Of the committee story George said it was "pretty thin." He did the story the Post carried yesterday.

Art phoned me yesterday. He had been called by Freed, who said he had been phoned by George O'Toole from San Francisco. O'Toole knew of the Post story. I read it to Art. Art then said there was at least one good result: anybody who cares knows Hall is not now talking to the committee. I had forgotten about this, although it had been on my mind earlier. This is because of something Hall told me in 1968: that he had been in jail with Trafficante in Havana. In fact he gave me details of how his lot was better because of this. So there is basis for fear of Trafficante, especially after what happened to Rosselli and Ginacana.

I also told Art that the committee was in touch with Odio and had been through Gaeton Fonzi, who had persuaded her not to talk to anyone else. Word to me from Miami. I told him about Fonzi and deM. And that Hemming had told me he had been given sanctuary in Havana by the Odios. Art said there is now bad blood between Hemming and Hall and that Howard is siding with Hemming.

How much truth there is to Odio's story, relating to her detail, I do not know. I am certain that something like what she testified to did happen and I did find the FBI had done much on this not included in any reporting I've seen.

This is further complicated by Oltmans' misuse of the Hall Enquirer story that Lester Logue offered him $50,000 to off JFK. Not exactly what Hall had told me. Logue denies. He appears to have bailed Hall out in Dallas in 1963, roughly close to that time. Odio's.

More complication from what happened to the transcript of my meetings with Hall. Fred Newcomb's wife Marlyn offered to transcribe. Took forever and then they gave copies out to many other who in turn made and distributed other copies. Something like this also happened with what amounted to the bullsessions in N.O. I have a partial copy.

My recollection of what Hall told me about the Odio story is that he was in that area at about that time and he thinks he did not see Odio but maybe he did. My impression then was that he may well have been there, probably was and was lying. My recollection is that Howard denies. Both say Seymour not with them that time.

Still more Newcomb complication, from Harry Dean, their distribution of that interview, too, and Dean's subsequent improvements of his original story.

Dean had been avoiding any attention. I turnedhim on by radio, twice. The first time was 12/66, when I went to LA from SF, staying with Bill O'Connell. Dean phoned my home to talk to me before I returned. When I returned I asked Bill to speak to him. Bill was uneasy, beliving it talks great experience to interview. I told him to just engaged Dean in a conversation, follow the leads Dean provides, let him talk about whatever he wants to talk about and then get around to what you want to talk about. Bill taped that conversation. It is probably as close to the truth as Dean can get. Bill and Maggie Field decided they needed a pro on this so they got Bill Turner to interview Dean. That is a transcript in which Bill learned nothing and Dean learned how great Turner says Turner is.

Next when I was in L.A. in 2/68 and on the radio Dean called again, this time while I was still in the studio. He kept the date I made to interview him the next night at the Newcomb's home, here I was staying. I had to leave to do a broadcast, he stayed and talked furthee with the Newcombs. He had a bag full of records Newcomb was to xerox for me but if it happened I never received a single sheet of paper.

Dean is a fink. The FBI is denying the wrong thing, unless this is one of Dean's current lies. There seems to be no doubt that he gave the FBI information. That he was a formally enrolled informer may be a different matter. I recall clearly that he told me what FBI agent stayed in touch with him about Hall and that it continued after the Warren Report was out. Why not? The FBI should have. L.A. agent named Horn.

Dean has developed a much greater story now, involving the various Garrison characters. He mentionednone of this to me and on the face it is falsehood. But he now has Hall in an entirely different role, conspiring with Clay Shaw and Harry Gabaldon in Mexico or Mexico City. All I recall about this is his saying that Hall had a friend who was a lieutenant in some Mexican spookery. Or rather Gabaldon did. Hall was active in Gabaldon's unsuccessful campaign for Congress. Dean claimed to me to have travelled with him on fund-raisings and such. Including to the offices of Rousellot and Utt.

Odio's state of mind is a quwstion. Without doubt she was at least partially truthful if not entirely so. Without doubt she was pressured. Reaction in self-defense is natural. Her life of the Commission period also is complicated. She was the bedmate of the Ferre who became Miami mayor, I think- brother of the Puerto Rican governor, GOP. There were some incidents of a personal nature when Ferre arranged with the Texas Instrument or more likely Texas Industries Rogerses for them to put Sylvia up after she left the hospital. Fr. Machann confirmed what she said that relates to him and my belief that he was in the position of a priest who had listened to a confession. The entire story is much more complicated than is even indicated in the Commission version. It involves another woman whose hisband was a baseball player, Lt. Butler, etc. and the Castorrs.

In all of this and with Fonzi on the Odio end there is no telling what will evolve. That this committee is unlikely to be or to be able to be responsible I do believe. Or even will want to. I have urged Art to urge Hall to obtain a lawyer. Yesterday Art said Hall has a cousin who is a country lawyer somewhere. I told him to tell Hall he should also have someone familiar with Washington, that while I could not say what Jim would or would not do, he has had dealings with this committee and has some knowledge of Congressional practises.

Art says that when Tatler called Hall the assassin some of Hall's story, where he was and when, did not check out. This does not mean he was the assassin, though. However, I believe the FBI did place Hall and Howard away from Dallas that day. Think in CD 1553. WW II.

There will probably be more.